PREFACE

THE Arabs carrying Islam westwards to the Atlantic Ocean first set foot on Spanish soil during July 710 the leader of the raid, which was to prove the forerunner of long Moslem occupation of the Iberian Peninsula, was named Tarif, and the promontory on which he landed commemorates his exploit by being called to this day Tarifa. The main invasion followed a year later; Tariq Ibn Ziyad, a Berber by birth, brought over from the African side of the narrows a comparatively small army which sufficed to overthrow Roderick the Visigoth and to supplant the Cross by the Crescent; he gave his name to that famous Rock of Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq, the Mountain of Tariq), which has been disputed by so many conquerors down the ages, and over which the British flag has fluttered since the early years of the eighteenth century.

When Ibn Hazm, the author of the book here translated, was born on 7 November 994, Islam had been established in Andalusia for nearly three hundred years. Since 756 Cordova, his birthplace, had been the capital of the Umaiyad rulers of this now independent kingdom;' for it was in the far West of the Moslem Empire that the remnant of the first dynasty of Caliphs found shelter and renewed greatness after being supplanted in Baghdad by their conquerors the Abbasids. The two centuries which followed the inauguration of the Western Caliphate witnessed the rise of a brilliant civilization and culture which have left an ineradicable impress on the peninsula, embodied in so many fine Moorish buildings; the Cathedral Mosque of Cordova, founded in 786, mentioned several times in the pages of this book, was converted into a Christian cathedral by Ferdinand III in 1236, but its familiar name " La Mesquita " still recalls the purpose for which it was originally erected. It was during Ibn Hazm's own lifetime that the Umaiyad Caliphate was finally extinguished.

Abu Muhammad `Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Sa'id Ibn' Hazm, to give our author his full name-for the Arabs call a man first after his son, secondly by his own name, and thirdly after his father and his ancestors-belonged to a notable family converted from Christianity several generations before. His father was a high official in the service of al-Mansur, regent of Hisham II, and of his son al-Muzaffar; al-Mansur and al-Muzaffar were members of the Banu 'Amir who had succeeded in arrogating to themselves all the power and privileges of the Caliphate but its name. Being the son of such a man, to whom he always refers as " the late vizier ", Ibn Hazm enjoyed a happy though secluded childhood, and the advantages of an excellent education; he tells us that most of his early teachers were women. The fall of the Banu 'Amir led soon after to the dismissal and house-arrest of their faithful minister, who died four years later on 22 June 1012. The Umaiyads were now near their end; Andalusia was in a state of anarchy; in 1013 the Berber insurgents seized and sacked Cordova, and on 13 July of that year Ibn Hazm fled from the city of his birth and set out upon extensive wanderings, of which he gives us fascinating glimpses in the pages of this book. In 1 o 16 `Ali Ibn Hammud proclaimed himself Caliph, but did not long survive his usurpation of power. The next fourteen years were chaotic in the extreme, as Umaiyad and Hammudid pretenders struggled for possession of the precarious throne. In 1030 the citizens of Cordova, weary of so much disorder, declared the Caliphate to be at an end and set up in its place a sort of republic; but the authority of Cordova had meanwhile dwindled away, and Andalusia was split between numerous independent principalities. The way was being prepared for the Reconquista. The fall of Granada in 1492 drove the Moslems from their last foothold in the Iberian Peninsula.

Ibn Hazm's first refuge after his flight from Cordova was Almeria, where he lived quietly and in comparative security for a time. But in 1016 Khairan, the governor of that city, having made common cause with `Ali Ibn Hammud against the Umaiyad Sulaiman, accused Ibn Hazm of harbouring Umaiyad sympathies, and after imprisoning him for some months banished him from his province. Our author made a brief stay at Aznalcazar, and then betook himself to Valencia, where `Abd al-Rahman IV al-Murtada the Umaiyad had just announced his succession to the Caliphate. He served al-Murtada as vizier and marched with his army to Granada; but the cause he supported was not successful, and he was captured and thrown into prison. However his release was not long delayed; and in February 1019 he returned to Cordova, after an absence of six years, to find al-Qasim Ibn Hammud in power. In December 1023 the Umaiyads again seized the Caliphate, and Ibn Hazm became vizier to 'Abd al-Rahman V al-Mustazhir. He had only seven weeks' enjoyment of this turn of fortune, for al-Mustazhir was assassinated and he himself was once again in jail. History does not record how long his new incarceration lasted; we only know that in 1027 he was in Jativa, where he composed the present book. He appears to have kept clear of politics for the rest of his days, which ended on 15 August 1064; but he by no means kept clear of trouble, for his religious views were in conflict with the prevalent orthodoxy and his writings were publicly burnt in Seville during his lifetime.

The Ring of the Dove was Ibn Hazm's only experiment in the field of elegant literature; for he was primarily interested in theology and law, on which he wrote voluminously. Its survival hangs upon the tenuous thread of a single manuscript, itself in fact an epitome rather than a complete transcription of the original. This precious codex, which is dated Rajab 738 of the Mohammedan reckoning, or February 1338 of the Christian era, is preserved in the fine Leiden collection, and was first studied by R. Dozy, the eminent historian of Moslem Spain. In 1914 the Russian savant D. K. Petrof published the text, which was reprinted as it stood, at Damascus in 1931. The editio princeps was necessarily somewhat defective textually, for the copyist of the manuscript was not very careful; but many improved readings were proposed by a succession of learned reviewers, prominent among them being I. Goldziher, C. Brockelmann, W. Marcais and A. R. Nykl. In 1931 an English translation was published by Nykl at Paris; ten years later M. Weisweiler produced an amiable German rendering, which has had a very considerable success. In 194.9 F. Gabrieli offered an Italian version; and in the same year L. Bercher issued at Algiers a revised edition of the text, accompanied by an interleaved French translation. Finally in 1952 an elegant Spanish translation was published by E. Garcia Gdmez.

The present writer is profoundly indebted to the labors of these his distinguished predecessors, which have illuminated most of the obscurities that disfigured Petrof's text. He has been eclectic, he hopes judiciously, in his interpretations of those not infrequent passages where scholars have been in conflict; and he has taken into his translation a few emendations of his own. He feels reasonably confident, though by no means complacent, that all but a very small number of cruxes have now been resolved.

The extremely interesting and learned introduction with which Nykl prefaced his meritorious but inelegant and somewhat unsatisfactory rendering disposes of the necessity of covering the same ground again; in brief, that most widely-read and humane scholar has discussed the relationship between The Ring of the Dove and the writings of the Troubadours, a subject which he has studied further in his excellent Hispano-Arabic Poetry (Baltimore, 194,6). My own intentions are in any case more modest; I have aimed at making an accurate and, I trust,

tolerably readable translation for the perusal of the general public, and not so much for the consideration of experts. I do not propose therefore to adventure into the perilous arena of comparative literature, and shall confine the remainder of these brief comments to a discursive appreciation of the contents of Ibn Hazm's book.

Arabic literature, which is exceedingly extensive in bulk, does not abound in books of the sort that modern taste finds readable. The explanation of this paradox is fairly obvious. Before the advent of Islam the Arabs appear to have had no tradition of writing and reading, and their literary instinct was satisfied by the composition of poetry and proverbial sayings, all transmitted by word of mouth. The fast book to be compiled in Arabia was the Koran; and that, according to native report, was put together by an editor after the death of Mohammed. Though poetry was regarded as a suspect pursuit by the narrowly orthodox, even they could not deny its value as an instrument of religious propaganda; and since religion in Islam soon became entangled with politics, the age-old forms of panegyric and satire continued to flourish in the brave new age of faith in action. Meanwhile the requirements of dogma, ritual and law encouraged the growth of a kind of literature which soon found acceptance as a respectable and indeed a meritorious occupation; wandering scholars made it their care to collect the traditional sayings of Mohammed, carried into remote provinces of the far-flung Moslem empire by the victorious expeditionaries of the cause. These traditions were in time organized into digests following a set pattern, the arrangement being by topics of ritual and law. In this way the Arabs came to regard the book as a collection of anecdotes written down in accordance with a premeditated scheme; though some still considered the memory to be a superior medium of transmission to the written word.

Contact with other peoples presently made the Arabs aware of the existence of other literatures. The Persians introduced them to the idea of adab, a term most difficult to translate; broadly speaking, adab is a form of prose composition whose primary purpose is not religious but secular, and which is intended not merely for instruction but also for enjoyment. It was the Persians who taught the Arabs to appreciate and to write elegant prose; they also initiated their rude conquerors into the pleasures of amusing fiction, and encouraged them to amorous adventures. From the Greeks the Arabs learned science and philosophy, the art and the delight of discussion and dialectic. Persians and Greeks together persuaded the austere and somewhat joyless Arabs that concubinage could be an Tsthetic and' intellectual as well as a physical pleasure. They taught them many other things besides, but these are not relevant to the present subject. Many of these lessons were naturally rejected with horror by the strictly religious, but they left their impress on Arabic literature.

The Arabs had certainly known and appreciated the joys of the flesh, long before Islam persuaded them that these were inferior to the delights of the spirit. So the poets inform us; and it is significant that poets were the heroes of the numerous desert romances, which now passed into wide circulation. Islam made it increasingly difficult for the situation to develop in which boy meets girl. Love became a complicated and dangerous exploit; though marriage was of course never difficult; the romantic drama acquired its stock characters and conventional scenes. Moreover the puritanical spirit of Islam, making a virtue out of social necessity, discovered as much satisfaction in the quest as in the conquest. The idealization of a sort of. Platonic love, in which the lover never achieved union with the beloved, inspired much of the finest poetry of the

Arabs; it supplied the mystics with a favourite theme of meditation, when they substituted the Divine for the human object of the most powerful of man's natural passions.

In The Ring of the Dove we find these various tendencies and influences meeting together, to form a perfect blend of sacred learning and profane delectation. Ibn Hazm never lets us forget that he is a Moslem, with a reverence for and an expert knowledge of the traditional-Moslem values and sciences. He freely illustrates his discourse with quotations from the Koran, and the Traditions of the Prophet, these latter supported by all the paraphernalia of what the Arabs called `ilm al-hadith, those chains of transmission " which are considered to guarantee the authenticity of the sayings put into Mohammed's mouth. He contrives to keep the discussion on a high moral level, though he occasionally takes a plunge into more dangerous depths; he rounds off his book with a pair of erudite and ethically irreproachable chapters (though even these contain a shocking anecdote or two) which he hoped would conciliate even the most austere spirit. At the same time he tells his stories, many of them autobiographical, in polished prose, embellished with extracts from his I own poetry; which would have been considerably s more extensive, had they not been drastically pruned by the copyist. In order that he may escape the charge of amusing without instructing, he binds his scattered narratives together with connecting links of theoretical discussion, in which he betrays his acquaintance with Greek philosophy-and we have yet to appreciate the full extent of Plato's influence on the Arabs-and organizes the whole material into a systematic pattern. He has written not a collection of tales, but a book.

Ibn Hazm's prose, judged by the canons of adab accepted in his day, is of a very high quality; it is learned without becoming frigid, rhetorical without being bombastic, fluent without degenerating into flatulence. His poetry, of which he appears to have had a considerable conceit, is in truth very mediocre, and we need shed few tears over its cavalier treatment at the hands of the scribe; nevertheless it is not wholly lacking in merit, and if in translation it comes out somewhat pedestrian and humdrum-and the fault is not entirely the translator's-yet for all that it succeeds to some extent in fulfilling the author's purpose of varying the pitch and pattern of his composition. The book as a whole is a book in our understanding of the word, and as such belongs to the very rare category of Arabic book which merits translation exactly as it stands.

For the sad but plain truth is that extremely few Arabic books translate well. Apart from that passion for the display of traditional religious learning which animated most Arab writers and recommended them to their fellows but inevitably set up a barrier between them and the outside world, grammar and philology were also held to be indispensable weapons in the armory of the ambitious author. The Arabs were fiercely proud of the complexities of "their syntax and the opulence of their vocabulary where learning conflicted with taste, learning generally won the day. Ibn Hazm is therefore surprisingly free of pedantry; it is doubtful whether any other Arab writer so well qualified as he would have resisted, as he does in one striking passage, the temptation to enumerate all that earlier scholars had said on the derivation of the Arabic word for " passion ". Yet Ibn Hazm was after all only human, and therefore indulges occasionally in poetic images drawn from the technicalities of grammar and syntax or from the obscurities of scholasticism. As a mirror to the society in which he was brought up he is almost uniquely valuable.

I have tried to translate as faithfully as possible, given the difficulties posed by the task of rendering a Semitic into an Aryan idiom. I do not think that the prose parts of this version need too much apology; but something ought certainly to be said on behalf of the pieces in metre and rhyme. The first thing to repeat and this is quite honestly not a case of an indifferent workman blaming his tools-is that Ibn Hazm was not a great poet; and as every translator is aware, there is no more baffling labour than to endeavor to do justice to the mediocre; the result is bound to be mediocre at best, and at worst it may be intolerable. If the translator possesses a sufficient degree of technical dexterity in versifying, he usually finds that indifferent verse is easier to stomach -when put into metre and rhyme than when dissected into strips of prose. And since his original for his part said what he had to say in rhyme and metre, it seems, at least to my way of thinking, that the interpreter should take the same trouble, for there is always the off-chance that he may occasionally produce something memorable. Those modern critics who decry the tradition, established in our own literature over several centuries, of rendering classical poetry into the traditional forms of English verse, have yet to prove, so far at least as Arabic is concerned, that their alternative solution of the problem is either theoretically more sound, or in practice, more successful.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE
In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate

THUS spoke Abu Muhammad, God forgive him:

No better beginning can there be for my book than that I should praise Almighty God as He is worthy, and pray for His blessings upon Mohammed His servant and messenger in particular, and upon all His prophets in general.

And next-may God preserve us and you from bewilderment, and may He not burden us with more than we can bear; may He of His goodly aid decree for us a guide to lead us into obedience of His Will, and bestow on us of His assistance some means that will draw us away and turn us from all offences against His commandments! May He not hand us over to our own weak resolves and feeble powers, the frailty of our physical frame and the confusion of our opinions, our evil choice, our little discretion, the corruption of our passions! Your letter came down to me from the city of Almeria to my dwelling-place in the Court of Jativa, in which you gave me joyous news of your well-being: I thanked God for this, and prayed to Him that he should continue it so, and grant you increase of your prosperity. Thereafter a little while and I beheld you in person, for you yourself sought me out despite the far distance, the vast sundering of our abodes the one from the other, the remoteness of the place of visitation, the great length of the space to be traversed, and the terror of the journey; and there were besides other obstacles which might well have diverted the most eager heart, and distracted the most resolute remembrance, except a man, held firm like you to the cord of loyalty, respecting those ancient dues and strongly-rooted affections, the rights of childish fondness and the comradeship of youth, a true lover withal for God. Such is the attachment, which God has established between us, and for this we praise Him and give Him thanks.

In the aforesaid letter you expressed ideas exceeding what I was accustomed to find in your other communications. Then on your arrival you revealed your intention plainly to me, and informed me of your views with that frankness which has always characterized our relations, that habit of sharing with me your every sweetness and bitterness, your every private thought and public profession. In this you were led by true affection, the which I doubly reciprocate, desiring no other recompense but to receive a like return. It was upon this theme that I composed the following verses in a long poem addressed to 'Ubaid Allah Ibn `Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Mughira, great-grandson of the Caliph al-Nasir (God have mercy upon him!), who was a dear friend of mine.

The passions most men boast them of
Are like a desert's noontide haze:
I love thee with a constant love
Unwithering through all my days.

This fondness I profess for thee
Is pure, and in my heart I bear
True love's inscription plain to see,

And all its tale is written there.

Had any passion, thine beside,
At any time my soul possessed,
I would have torn my worthless hide
And plucked that alien from my breast.

There is no other prize I seek:
Thy love is my desire sincere:
Only upon this theme I speak
To capture thy complacent ear.

This if I win, the earth's expanse,
And all mankind, are but as dust,
Yea, the wide world's inhabitants
Are flies that crawl upon its crust.

You charged me--may God exalt you! -to compose for you an essay describing Love, wherein I should set forth its various meanings, its causes and accidents, and what happens in it and to it, after the way of truth, neither adding anything nor embroidering anything, but only setting down exactly what I have to tell according to the manner of its occurrence, and mentioning all to the full extent of my recollection and the limit of my capacity. I have accordingly hastened to fulfill your desire; though but for the wish to comply with your commission I would never have undertaken it at all, being too poverty-stricken to attempt so great a task. Indeed it behoves us rather, considering the brief duration of our lives, not to expend them save upon those enterprises which we may hope will secure for us a spacious destination and. a fair homecoming upon the morrow. Yet it is true that Cadi Humam Ibn Ahmad has informed me on the authority of Yahya Ibn Malik, who had it from ` A'idh upon a chain of authority mounting to Abu 'l-Darda', that the latter said, "Recreate your souls with a little vanity, that it may the better aid them to hold fast to the truth." A righteous and well-approved father of the faith declared, " The man who has never known how to comport himself as a cavalier will never know how to be truly god fearing." The Prophet is reported to have said, " Rest your souls from time to time: they are apt to rust, in the same way that steel rusts."

In performing this task with which you have charged me I must perforce relate such things as I 'have personally witnessed, or what I have discovered by diligent research, or matters communicated to me by reliable informants of my own times. Pray excuse me if I sometimes do no more than hint at the names of the heroes, of my anecdotes, and do not mention them more explicitly; this is due either to some shame which I do not hold it permissible to uncover, or in order to protect a loving friend or an illustrious man. It will suffice me to name only those the naming of whom does no harm, and whose mention brings no opprobrium either upon ourselves or them; either because the affair is so notorious that concealment and the avoidance of clear specification will do the party concerned no good, or for the simple reason that the person being reported on is quite content that his story should be made public, and by no means disapproves of its being bandied about.

I shall be quoting in this essay verses which I have composed myself upon my own observations. Do not take it amiss, my friend, or whoever else may happen to see this volume, that I am here following the fashion of those who always quote themselves in their stories; such is the way of men who affect the writing of poetry. Moreover my friends make me shy to write about their adventures after their own private ways and habits; so I have been satisfied to mention here only what has occurred to me, within the terms of reference you have prescribed, in every case attributing the incident to myself. I have kept in this book to the bounds set by you, limiting myself to things which I have either seen with my own eyes, or I am convinced are true as deriving from trustworthy reporters. Spare me those tales of Bedouins, and of lovers long ago! Their ways were not our ways, and the stories told of them are too numerous in any case. It is not my practice to wear out anybody's riding-beast but my own; I am not one of those who deck themselves up in borrowed plumes.

In all this I ask God's forgiveness and succour; there is no Lord beside Him.

PRELIMINARY EXCURSUS

I HAVE divided this treatise into thirty chapters. Of these, ten are concerned with the root-principles of Love, the first being the immediately following chapter on the Signs of Love. After this comes a chapter on Those who have fallen in Love while Asleep; then a chapter on Those who have fallen in Love through a Description; next a chapter on Those who have fallen in Love at First Sight; a chapter on Those whose Love has only become True after Long Association; a chapter on Allusion by Words; a chapter on Hinting with the Eyes; a chapter on Correspondence; and lastly (of these first ten) a chapter on the Messenger.

The second section of the book comprises twelve chapters on the accidents of Love, and its praiseworthy and blameworthy attributes. (Here I should remark in parenthesis that Love is in fact an accident, and as such cannot properly be said itself to be susceptible to accidents; Love is an attribute, and attributes may riot be further qualified. I am therefore speaking metaphorically in discussing Love's accidents and attributes, putting the attribute itself in the place of the thing qualified thereby. When we say and feel that one accident is greater or smaller, more beautiful or uglier in reality than another accident, according to our apprehension of that reality, we recognize that accidents differ from each other, in terms of excess or deficiency, in respect only of their visible and knowable essence; there is no question of numerical quantity or physical partition being relevant to them, seeing that they do not occupy any space.) This section is made up first of a chapter on the Helping Friend, then a chapter on Union, then a chapter on Concealing the Secret, and after that chapters on Revealing and Divulging the Secret, on Compliance, and on Opposition; a chapter on Those who have fallen in Love with a certain Quality and thereafter have not loved any other different to it; and chapters on Fidelity, on Betrayal, on Wasting Away, and on Death.

In the third part of the essay there are six chapters on the misfortunes which enter into Love. These chapters deal respectively with the Reproacher, the Spy, the Slanderer, Breaking Off, Separation, and Forgetting. Two of these six chapters are matched each with a corresponding chapter (of those already mentioned) on an opposite subject: the chapter on the Reproacher is paired with the, chapter on the Helping Friend, and the chapter on Breaking Off complements the chapter on Union. The other four have no contrasting themes in Love's repertory. The chapters on the Spy and the Slanderer have no opposites, except their removal altogether. The real nature of opposites is that when the opposite to a given condition occurs, the original state is removed, however much the schoolmen may have differed in their views of the matter; we would have thrashed the question out thoroughly, but for the fear of dilating at too great length upon a topic not absolutely material to the present book. As for the Chapter on Separation, its true opposite would be contiguity of dwellings; but contiguity is not one of the themes of Love, which we are at present engaged in discussing. And the opposite of the chapter on Forgetting is really Love itself, since forgetting means the removal and non-existence of Love.

Finally come two chapters to terminate the discourse a chapter discussing the Vileness of Sinning, and a chapter on the Virtue of Continence. I have planned the matter thus so that the conclusion of our exposition and the end of our discussion may be an exhortation to obedience to Almighty God, and a recommendation to do good and to eschew evil; which last commandment is indeed a duty imposed upon all believers.

Notwithstanding all, this, in setting out certain of these chapters we have in fact varied the order apportioned in the course of this opening chapter of the treatise. We have arranged them serially from the beginning to the conclusion of the story according to there due right of precedence, their gradations, and their actuality, proceeding methodically from the first degree to the last. We have also placed each pair of opposites side by side; as a result, the proper sequence has been departed from in a few chapters. I ask God's help again.

My actual disposition of the material is therefore as follows. I have placed first and foremost this chapter in the middle of which we now are; it comprises the preliminary excursus, the division of the chapters, and a discourse on the Nature of Love. This is followed by the chapter on the Signs of Love; then the chapter on Those who have fallen in Love through a Description; then the chapter on Those who have fallen in Love at First Sight; then the chapter on Those who have only fallen in Love after Long Association; then the chapter on Those who have fallen in Love with a certain Quality and thereafter have not loved any other different to it; then the chapter on Allusion by Words; then the chapter on Hinting with the Eyes; then the chapter on Correspondence ; then the chapter on the Messenger ; then the chapter on Concealing the Secret; then the chapter on Divulging the Secret; then the chapter on Compliance; then the chapter on Opposition; then the chapter on the Reproacher; then the chapter on the Helpful Brother; then the chapter on the Spy; then the chapter on the Slanderer; then the chapter on Union; then the chapter on Breaking Off ; then the chapter on Fidelity; then the chapter on Betrayal then the chapter on Separation; then the chapter on Contentment; then the chapter on Wasting Away; then the chapter on Forgetting; then the chapter on Death; then the chapter on the Vileness of Sinning; and lastly the chapter on the Virtue of Continence.

Of the Nature of Love

Of Love--may God exalt you! -the first part is jesting, and the last part is right earnestness. So majestic are its divers aspects, they are too subtle to be described; their reality can only be apprehended by personal experience. Love is neither disapproved by Religion, nor prohibited by the Law; for every heart is in God's hands.

Many rightly guided caliphs and orthodox imams have been lovers. Of those who have lived in our beloved Andalusia I may mention `Abd al-Rahman Ibn Mu'awiya, the lover of Da`ja; al-Hakam Ibn Hisham; `Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Hakam, whose passion for Tarub the mother of his son `Abd Allah is more famous among men than the very sun itself; Muhammad Ibn `Abd al-Rahman, well-known admirer of Ghizlan who bore him 'Uthman, al-Qasim and al-Mutarrif; and Al-Hakam al-Mustansir, adorer of Subh mother of Hisham al-Mu'aiyad Billah, who refused to interest himself in any other child but hers.

Such instances are extremely numerous; and but for the rightful claims of our rulers upon the respect of all Moslems, so that we ought to recount concerning them only such stories as illustrate martial resolution and the propagation of the faith-and their amours were after all conducted in the privacy of their palaces and in the bosom of their families, so that it would not be at all seemly to report on them-but for this I would certainly have introduced not a few anecdotes illustrating their part in the love-business. As for their men of State and pillars of Empire, their tender romances are indeed innumerable; the most recent instance being the affair we were witnessing only yesterday between al-Muzaffar `Abd al-Malik Ibn Abi 'Amir and Wahid the cheese monger's daughter, a grand passion which so transported that great nobleman that

he actually married the girl; she was subsequently ` inherited' by the-grand--vizier `Abd Allah Ibn Maslama after the fall of the `Amirids; and when `Abd Allah in his turn was put to death, she became the consort of a Berber chieftain. I was told of a similar instance too by Abu 'l-`Aish Ibn Maimun al-Qurashi al-Husaini: Nizar Ibn Ma` add, ruler of Egypt, would not look upon his son Mansur Ibn Nizar his successor on the throne, the one who claimed to be a god-for quite a time after he was born, so as to spare the feelings of a certain 'slave-girl with whom he was deeply in love; yet he had no other male issue but this child to inherit his kingdom and keep his memory green.

Of the saints and learned doctors of the faith who lived in past ages and times long ago, some there are whose love lyrics are sufficient testimony to their passion, so that they require no further notice. It will be enough to mention only one name: 'Ubaid Allah Ibn `Abd Allah' Ibn 'Utba Ibn Masud was famous for his tender verses, and he, as we remember, was one of the celebrated Seven Jurists of Medina. As for Ibn `Abbas, a single sentence once uttered by him amply dispenses with any need for further quotation; he pronounced the weighty judgment, " This man was slain by love: there is therefore no case for blood wit or retaliation."

Concerning the nature of Love men have held various and divergent opinions, which they have debated at great length. For my part I consider Love as a conjunction between scattered parts of souls that have become divided in this physical universe, a union effected within the substance of their original sublime element. I do not share the view advanced by Muhammad Ibn Dawud-God have mercy on his soul! -who followed certain philosophers in declaring that spirits are segmented spheres; rather do I suppose an affinity of their vital forces in the supernal world, which is their everlasting home, and a close approximation in the manner of their constitution. We know the secret of commingling and separation in created things to be simply a process of union and disassociation; every form always cries out for its corresponding form; like is ever at rest with like. Congeneity has a perceptible effect and a visible influence; repulsion of opposites, accord between similar, attractions of like for like these are facts taking place all round us. How much more then should the same factors operate within the soul, whose world is pure and etherial, whose substance is volatile and perfectly poised, whose constituent principle is so disposed as to be intensely sensitive to harmony, inclination, yearning, aversion, passionate desire and antipathy. All this is common knowledge it is immediately observable in the moods which successively control every man, and to which we all accommodate ourselves successfully. Allah Himself says, "It is He that created you of one soul, and fashioned thereof its spouse, that he might find repose in her" (Koran VII I8g). Be it noted that the reason God assigns for man's reposing in woman is that she was made out of him.

If the cause of Love were physical beauty, the consequence would be that no body defective in any shape or form would attract admiration; yet we know of many a man actually preferring the inferior article, though well aware that another is superior, and quite unable to turn his heart away from it. Again, if Love were due to a harmony of characters, no man would love a person who was not of like purpose and in concord with him. We therefore conclude that Love is something within the soul itself.

Sometimes, it is true, Love comes as a result of a definite cause outside the soul, but then it passes away when the cause itself disappears: one who is fond of you because of a certain circumstance will turn his back on you when that motive no longer exists. I have made this point in the verses, which follow.

My love for thee shall aye endure
As now, most perfect and most pure;
It brooks no increase, no decline,
Since it's complete, and wholly thine.

I cannot any cause discover,
Except my will, to be thy lover,
And boldly challenge any man
To name another, if he can.

For sure, when any thing we see
Of its own self sole cause to be,
That being, being of that thing,
Lives ever undiminishing

But when we find its origin
Is other than the thing it's in,
Our losing that which made it be
Annihilates it instantly.

This statement is confirmed by the fact that Love, as we know, is of various kinds. The noblest sort, of Love is that which exists between persons who love each other in God either because of an identical zeal for the righteous work upon which they are engaged, or as the result of a harmony in sectarian belief and principles, or by virtue of a common possession of some noble knowledge. Next to this is the love, which springs from kinship; then the love of familiarity and the sharing of identical aims; the love of comradeship and acquaintance; the love, which is rooted in a benevolent regard for one's fellow; the love that results from coveting the loved one's worldly elevation; the love that is based upon a shared secret which both must conceal; love for the sake of getting enjoyment and satisfying desire; and passionate love, that has no other cause but that union of souls to which we have referred above.

All these varieties of Love come to an end when their causes disappear, and increase or diminish with them; they are intensified according to the degree of their proximity, and grow languid as their causes draw further and further away. The only exception. is the Love of true passion, which has the mastery of the soul: this is the love, which passes not away save with death. You will find a man far advanced in years, who swears that he has forgotten love entirely; yet when you remind him of it, he calls that love back to mind, and is rejoiced; he is filled with youthful desire; his old emotion returns to him; his yearning is mightily stirred. In none of the other sorts of love does anything like this happen: that mental preoccupation, that derangement of the reason, that melancholia, that transformation of settled temperaments, and alteration of natural dispositions, that moodiness, that sighing, and all the other, symptoms of profound agitation which accompany assionate love.

All this proves that true Love is a spiritual approbation, a fusion of souls. It may be objected, that if Love were as I have described, it would be exactly equal in both the parties concerned, since the two parts would be partners in the act of union and the share of each would be the same. To this I reply, that the objection is indeed well-founded; but the soul of the man who loves not one who loves him is beset on all sides by various accidents which occlude, and veils that encompass it about, those earthy temperaments which now overlay it, so that his soul does not sense that part which was united with it before it came to occupy its present lodging-place. Had his soul been liberated from these restrictions, the two would have been equal in their experience of union and love. As for the lover, his soul is indeed free and aware of where that other is that shared with it in ancient proximity; his soul is ever seeking for the other, striving after it, searching it out, yearning to encounter it again, drawing it to itself if might be as a magnet draws the iron.

The essential force of the magnet, when in contact with the essential force of the iron, is not so strong or so refined as to seek out after the iron, for all that the iron is of the self-same kind and element; it is the force of the iron, by virtue of its natural strength, that reaches out after its kind' and is drawn towards it. Movement always takes place from the side of the more powerful. The force of the iron, when left to itself and not prevented by any restriction, seeks out what-resembles itself and with single-minded devotion, so to speak, hastens towards it; this it does naturally and necessarily, not out of free choice and set purpose. When you hold back the iron in your hand it is no longer attracted to the magnet, because the force it possesses is not sufficient to overcome the stronger force holding it back. When the particles of iron are numerous, one group of these is fully occupied with the other and all are adequately satisfied by their own kind, and do not care to seek after that small portion of their forces standing at a distance from them. When the mass of the magnet is large, however, and its forces are a match for all the forces lying within the iron's mass, the iron reverts to its accustomed nature.

Similarly the fire which is latent in the flint, in spite of the force belonging to fire to unite and to summon together its scattered parts wherever they may be, does not in fact issue from the flint until the latter is struck. When the two masses press and rub closely against each other, the fire is liberated; otherwise it remains latent within the flint, and does not show or manifest itself at all.

My theory is further proved by the fact that you will never find two persons in love with one another without there being some likeness and agreement of natural attributes between them. This condition must definitely obtain, even if only to a small degree; the more numerous the resemblances, the greater will be their congeneity and the firmer their affection. It is only necessary to look for this, and you will see it quite plainly on all hands. The Messenger of Allah confirmed the matter when he said, " Spirits are regimented battalions those which know one another associate familiarly together, while those which do not know one another remain at variance." A saint is reported as having stated, " The spirits of believers know one another."

For the same reason Hippocrates was not distressed when he was told of a man deficient in virtue who was in love with him. The matter being remarked upon, he said, " He would not have fallen in love with me if I had not accorded with him in some aspect of my character." Plato relates how a certain king threw him in prison unjustly, and he did not cease to argue his case until he proved his innocence, and the king realised that he had been unjust to him. The minister who had charged himself with conveying Plato's words to the monarch exclaimed, " O king, it

has now become evident to you that he is innocent; what more lies between you and him? " The king answered, " Upon my life, I have nothing against him, except that I feel within myself an inexplicable disgust with him." The minister reported this saying to Plato. The latter remarked, continuing his story, " So I was obliged to search within my soul and my character for something resembling his soul and his character, which might be a point of correspondence between us. I considered his character, and observed that he loved equity and hated injustice. I diagnosed the same disposition within myself; and no sooner did I set this point of agreement into motion and confront his soul with this characteristic which he possessed in common with me, than he gave orders for my release." Plato relates that the king then said to his minister, " All the antipathy against him that I formerly felt within me has now been dissolved."

As for what causes Love in most cases to choose a beautiful form to light upon, it is evident that the soul itself being beautiful, it is affected by all beautiful things, and has a yearning for perfect symmetrical images whenever it sees any such image, it fixes itself upon it; then, if it discerns behind that image something of its own kind, it becomes united and true love is established. If however the soul does not discover anything of its own kind behind the image, its affection goes no further than the form, and remains mere carnal desire. Indeed, physical forms have a wonderful faculty of drawing together the scattered parts of men's souls.

I have read in the first book of the Pentateuch how the Prophet Jacob, during the days when he was watching his uncle Laban's sheep, to be a dowry for his uncle's daughter, entered into an engagement with Laban that he should share with him the offspring of the flock; all the lambs that were of a single colour would belong to Jacob, while every lamb born with a white blaze was to fall to Laban. Now Jacob would lay hold of the tree branches and strip off the bark of a half, and leave the other half as they were; then he cast all into the water whither the sheep came down to drink. He would contrive to send the pregnant ewes down to drink at that time; and they would give birth in due course half to single-coloured lambs, and half to lambs marked with a blaze

It is also related that a certain physiognomies had brought before him a black child, whose parents were both white. He examined his features, and saw that the infant undoubtedly belonged to the pair; then he desired to be acquainted with the place where the parents had lain down together. He was brought into the house where their marriage-bed was, and observed facing the woman's field of vision the picture of a black man painted on the wall. He at once remarked to the father, " It is on account of this picture that you have had such a son born to you."

The poets of the scholastics frequently touch on this theme in their compositions, addressing the external object of the vision as though it were an inner concept of the mind. The subject is very common in the poetry of al-Nazzam Ibrahim Ibn Saiyar and of other scholastics; I myself have treated the topic in the verses, which follow.

No other cause of victory
There is, when we defeat the foe,
No other reason that we flee
Before their onset, as I know,

But that the souls of all mankind
In urgently unanimity,
O pearl in human hearts enshrined!
Strive to possess themselves of thee.

And so, where're thou dost precede,
None following lags far behind,
But with thy mounting light to lead
All see the way, and triumph find.

But when to rearward thou dost stand
The warriors emulate thy deed,
And, answering their hearts' command,
Wheel round to join thee with all speed.

I have another poem on the same subject.

Say, art thou of the angels' sphere,
Or sharest thou our human kind?
My dazzled judgment sees not clear;
Bewilderment defeats my mind.'

The vision of my outward eye
A human shape descries in thee;
When inward reason I apply,
I know thy form is heavenly.

Then blessed be God, Who did design
His creatures so symmetrical,
And fashioned thee a light to shine
In natural beauty over all.

Thou the primeval Spirit art,
As I undoubtingly believe,
Which an affinity of heart
Made our souls worthy to receive.

No other proof do we possess
To argue thy mortality,
But that thy visual loveliness
Impinges on our eyes, to see.

Did we not view thy essence clear

Within -this world of space and time,
We would declare in faith sincere
Thou art pure Reason, true, sublime!

One of my friends has called another poem of mine, from which the next extract comes, " The Imaginative Perception ".

All opposites, as thou dost see,
In him subsist combined;
Then how shall such variety
Of Meanings be defined?

O wondrous body that dost lie
Beyond dimensions' range!
O accident, that shalt not die,
Exempt from chance and change!

Thou cuttest through the tangled thread
Of scholars' argument,
And makest, in thy light thus shed,
The truth self-evident.

Precisely the same thing is to be found in the case of Hatred: you will see two persons hating one another for no basic cause or reason whatsoever, but simply because the one has .a wholly irrational antipathy for the other.

Love-may God exalt you! -is in truth a baffling ailment, and its remedy is in strict accord with the degree to which it is treated; it is a delightful malady, a most desirable sickness. Whoever is free of it likes not to be immune, and whoever is struck down by it yearns not to recover. Love represents as glamorous that which a man formerly disdained, and renders easy for him that which he hitherto found hard; so that it even transforms established temperaments and inborn dispositions, as shall be set forth briefly in its own appropriate chapter, God willing.

Among my acquaintances I once knew a youth who was bogged down in love and stuck fast in its toils passion had grievously affected him, sickness had worn 1-dm out. Yet his soul found no comfort in praying to Almighty God to remove his afflictions; his tongue was not loosed in any petition for deliverance. His only prayer was to be united with and to be possessed of the one he loved, despite the enormity of his sufferings and the long protraction of his cares. (What is one to think of the sick man who desires not to be rid of his sickness?). One day I was seated with him, and felt so distressed at the visible evidence of his miserable condition, his head cast down, his staring eyes, that I said to him (among other things), " May Allah grant you relief! " I at once observed in his face the marks of strong displeasure with what I had said. It was with such a situation in mind that I composed the follow verses, part of a long poem.

O rare delight, these pains that break
My heart, dear hope, for thy sweet sake!

Through all the days, in all my woe,
I will not ever let thee go.

If any man should dare to say,
" Thou shalt forget his love one day"
The only answer I will give
Is an eternal negative?

What I have described is all the exact opposite of what Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Qasim Ibn Muhammad al-Qurashi once told me in reference to his own case. (He is the man better known as al-Shabanisi, a descendant of Imam Hisham Ibn `Abd al-Rahman Ibn Mu'awiya.) He declared that he had never loved anyone, never grieved to be separated from any friend, and never in all his life transgressed the limits of association and comradeship to penetrate the bounds of love and passionate affection.

THE SIGNS OF LOVE

LOVE has certain signs, which the intelligent man quickly detects, and the shrewd man readily recognizes. Of these the first is the brooding gaze: the eye is the wide gateway of the soul, the scrutinizer of its secrets, conveying its most private thoughts, and giving expression to its deepest-hid feelings. You will see the lover gazing at the beloved unblinkingly; his eyes follow the loved one's every movement, withdrawing as he withdraws, inclining as he inclines, just as the chameleon's stare shifts with the shifting of the sun. I have written a poem on this topic, from which the following may be quoted.

My eye no other place of rest
Discovers, save with thee;
Men say the lodestone is possessed
Of a like property.

To right or left it doth pursue
Thy movements up or down,
As adjectives in grammar do
Accord them with their noun.

The lover will direct his conversation to the beloved, even when he purports however earnestly to address another: the affectation is apparent to anyone with eyes to see. When the loved one speaks, the lover listens with rapt attention to his every word; he marvels at everything the beloved says, however extraordinary and absurd his observations may be; he believes him implicitly even when he is clearly lying, agrees with him though he is obviously in the wrong, testifies on his behalf for all that he may be unjust, follows after him however he may proceed and whatever line of argument he may adopt. The lover hurries to the spot where the beloved is at the moment, endeavors to sit as near him as possible sidles up close to him, lays aside all occupations that might oblige him to leave his company, makes light of any matter however weighty that would demand his parting from him, is very slow to move when he takes his leave of him. I have put this somewhere into verse.

No captive for the gallows bound
With more reluctance quits his cell
Than I thy presence, in profound
Regret to say farewell.

But when, my darling, comes the time
That we may be together, I
Run swiftly as the moon doth climb
The ramparts of the sky.

At last, alas! That sweet delight
Must end anew; I, lingering yet,

Turn slowly, as from heaven's height
The fixed stars creep to set.

Other signs of love are that sudden confusion and excitement betrayed by the lover when he unexpectedly sees the one he loves coming upon him unawares, that agitation which overmasters him on beholding someone who resembles his beloved or, on hearing his name suddenly pronounced. This I have put into verse, as the following extract indicates.

Whene'er my ranging eyes descry
A person clad in red,
My heart is split with agony
And sore discomforted.

His roguish glance, as I conclude,
Has shed such human blood
That now his garments are imbrued
All saffron from the flood.

A man in love will give prodigally to the limit of his capacity, in a way that formerly he would have refused; as if he were the one receiving the donation, he the one whose happiness is the object in view; all this in order that he may show off his good points, and make himself desirable. How often has the miser opened his purse strings, the scowler relaxed his frown, the coward leapt heroically into the fray, the clod suddenly become sharp-witted, the boor turned into the perfect gentleman, the stinker transformed himself into the elegant dandy, the sloucher smartened up, the decrepit recaptured his lost youth, the godly gone wild, the self-respecting kicked over the traces-and all because of love!

All these signs are to be observed even before the fire of Love is properly kindled, ere its conflagration truly bursts forth, its blaze waxes fierce, its flames leap up. But when the fire really takes a hold and is firmly established, then you will see the secret whispering, the unconcealed turning away from all present but the beloved. I have some verses in which I have contrived to bring together many of these signs, and will now quote from these.

I love to hear when men converse
And in the midst his name rehearse;
The air I breathe seems redolent
That moment with the amber's scent,
But when he speaketh, I give ear
Unto no other sitting near,
But lean to catch delightedly
His pretty talk and coquetry,
Nor yet, though my companion there
The Prince of All the Faithful were,
Permit my mind to be removed
On his account from my beloved.

And if, through dire compulsion, I
Stand up at last to say good-bye,
Still glancing fondly at my sweet
I stumble, as on wounded feet;
My eyes upon his features play
The while my body drifts away,
As one the billows tumble o'er
Yet gazes, drowning, on the shore.
When I recall how distant he
Now is, I choke in sorrow's sea,
Weary as one who sinks, to expire
In some deep bog, or raging fire.
Yet, if thou sayest, " Canst thou still
Aspire to heaven? " " That I will ",
I answer boldly, " and I know
The stairs that to its summit go! "

Other outward signs and tokens of love are the following, which are apparent to all having eyes in their heads: abundant and exceeding cheerfulness at finding oneself with the beloved in a narrow space, and a corresponding depression on being together in a wide expanse; to engage in a playful tug-of-war for anything the one or the other lays hold of; much clandestine winking; leaning sideways and supporting oneself against the object of one's affection; endeavoring to touch his hand, and whatever other part of his body one can reach, while engaged in conversation ; and drinking the remainder of what the beloved has left in his cup, seeking out the very spot against which his lips were pressed.

There are also contrary signs that occur according to casual provocations and accidental incitements, and a variety of motivating causes and stimulating thoughts. Opposites are of course likes, in reality; when things reach the limit of contrariety, and stand at the furthest bounds of divergence, they come to resemble one another. This is decreed by God's omnipotent power, in a manner that baffles entirely the human imagination. Thus, when ice is pressed a long time in the hand, it finally produces the same effect as fire. We find that extreme joy and extreme sorrow kill equally; excessive and violent laughter sends the tears coursing from the eyes. It is a very common phenomenon in the world about us. Similarly with lovers: when they love each other with an equal ardour, and their mutual affection is intensely strong, they will turn against one another without any valid reason, each purposely contradicting the other in whatever he may say; they quarrel violently over the smallest things, each picking up every word that the other lets fall and willfully misinterpreting it. All these devices are aimed at testing and proving what each is seeking in the other.

Now the difference between this sham, and real aversion and contrariness born of deep-seated hatred and inveterate contention, is that lovers are very quickly reconciled after their disputes. You will see a pair of lovers seeming to have reached the extreme limit of contrariety, to the point that you would reckon not to be mended even in the instance of a person of most tranquil spirit, wholly exempt from rancour, save after a long interval, and wholly irreparable in the case of a quarrelsome man; yet in next to no time you will observe them to

have become the best of friends once more; silenced are those mutual reproaches, vanished that disharmony; forthwith they are laughing again and playfully sporting together. The same scene may be enacted several times at a single session. When you see a pair of lovers behaving in such a fashion, let no doubt enter your mind, no uncertainty invade your thoughts; you may be sure without hesitation, and convinced as by an unshakable certainty, that there lies between them a deep and hidden secret-the secret of true love. Take this then for a sure test, a universally valid experiment: it is the product only of an equal partnership in love, and a true concord of hearts. I myself have observed it frequently.

Another sign is when you find the lover almost entreating to hear the loved one's name pronounced, taking an extreme delight in speaking about him, so that the subject is a positive obsession with him; nothing so much rejoices him, and he is not in the least restrained by the fear that someone listening may realise what he is about, and someone present will understand his true motives. Love for a thing renders you blind and deaf. If the lover could so contrive, that in the place where he happens to be there should be no talk of anything but his beloved, he would never leave that spot for any other in the whole world.

It can happen that a man sincerely affected by love will start to eat his meal with an excellent appetite; yet the instant the recollection of his loved one is excited, the food sticks in his throat and chokes his gullet. It is the same if he is drinking, or talking he begins to converse with you gaily enough, and then all at once he is invaded by a chance thought of his dear one. You will notice the change in his manner of speaking, the instantaneous failure of his conversational powers; the sure signs are his long silences, the way he stares at the ground, his extreme taciturnity. One moment he is all smiles, lightly gesticulating; the next, and he has become completely boxed up, sluggish, distrait, rigid, too weary to utter a single word, irritated by the most innocent question.

Love's signs also include a fondness for solitude and a pleasure in being alone, as well as a wasting of the body not accompanied by any fever or ache preventing free activity and liberty of movement. The walk is also an unerring indication and never-deceiving sign of an inward lassitude of spirit. Sleeplessness too is a common affliction of lovers; the poets have described this condition frequently, relating how they watch the stars, and giving an account of the night's interminable length. I too have some verses on this topic, in which I also touch on the guarding of Love's secret, and mention the signs from which it may be prognosticated.

The clouds, when they my tears discerned,
A lesson from my weeping learned
And covered all the parched domain
With deluges of flooding rain.

And has the night because of thee
Now come to share my misery,
Or will it succour bring, perchance,
To this my weary vigilance?

For if the shadows of the night
Will ne'er disperse, and turn to light,

Until my eyes, pressed down by woes,
At last in weary slumber close;

I do not think that any way
Remains, to lead me back to day,
But still augmenting sleeplessness
My every moment shall oppress.

And now dark clouds o'erspread the
And hide the starlight from my eyes,
Concealing from my anxious gaze
The comfort of their fitful blaze.

Such inward torment of the mind,
Thee loving, dearest heart, I find,
Surmise alone can fully guess
And advertize my soul's distress.

Another poem of mine-I quote an extract-deals with the same notion.

I am the shepherd of the skies,
Deputed to preserve
The planets as they sink and rise,
The stars that do not swerve.

Those, as they swing their lamps above
Our earth, by night possessed,
Are like the kindled fires of love
Within my darkling breast.

Or I am now the gardener
Of some green mead, methinks,
And through the grasses, here and there,
A white narcissus winks.

Were Ptolemy alive to-day,
And did he know of me,
" Thou art the maestro ", he would say,
" Of all astronomy! "

A thing is sometimes mentioned on account of that which causes it to occur. In the verses I have just cited, I have compared two pairs of things with each other in one and the same stanza, the second of the poem beginning " Those, as they swing their lamps above this is considered very unusual in poetry. However, I can also quote an even more perfect example of

virtuosity from my own works-the likening of three, and even four pairs of things in a single stanza; both these feats have been accomplished in the piece here following.
width="151"

Still yearning, and disquieted,
Still sleepless tossing on his bed,
Wits drunken and disorderly
With the coarse wine of calumny;

He shows to thee in one brief hour
Marvels defeating reason's power
Now hostile, now the friend sincere,
Now running off, now pressing near

As if this passion, this reproof,
To be complacent, or aloof,
Were stars conjoining, or in flight,
Fortune's benevolence, or spite.

After so long refusal, he
Took pity on my love, and me,
And I, who envied others' chance,
Am target now for envy's glance.

Together in a garden gay
With bloom we passed our happy day,
The while the bright and whispering flowers
Gave thanks to God for morning's showers

As if the matin rains, indeed,
The clouds, and that sweet-scented mead,
Were dropping tears, and eyes bedewed,
And cheeks with roses all imbued.

Let none find fault with me or object to my use of the term "conjoining ", for those who have knowledge of the stars speak of the meeting of two stars in a single degree as a " conjunction ".

I have not yet exhausted my repertoire, but can cite a still more perfect example, the likening of five pairs of things in a single stanza, as in my next quotation.
width="151"

She sat there privily with me,
And wine besides, to make us three,
While night profound o'ershadowing
Stretched out its long and stealthy wing.

A damsel fair-I would prefer
To die, than not live close with her;
And is it such a dreadful crime
To wish to live this little time?

It was as if myself, and she,
The cup, the wine, the obscurity,
Were earth, and raindrops, and pearls set
Upon a thread, and gold, and jet.

That is a point beyond which it is impossible for anyone to go; neither prosody nor the structure of words will tolerate more than five comparisons in the same stanza.

Trepidation overtakes lovers in two situations. The first is when the lover hopes to meet the beloved, and then some obstacle intervenes to prevent it. I know a man whose loved one had promised to visit hi; thereafter I never saw him but that he was coming and going the whole time, quite unable to be still or to remain in one place; now he would advance, anon he would retire; joy had made him positively nimble and spritely, though formerly he was exceedingly grave and sedate. I have some verses on the subject of awaiting the visit of the beloved. width="151"

I waited still, until night came
Upon me, hoping yet
To meet thee, O my quest, and aim
On which my heart is set!

Then I, who never any day
Despaired, though long the night,
At last to dark despair gave way
When dark o'ercame my light.

Moreover I a proof will cite
That cannot tell a lie;
The like such problems solve aright
As reason else defy:

To wit, if thou shouldst ever deign
One night to visit me,
No longer darkness would remain,
But light eternally.

The second cause of trepidation is when a quarrel breaks out between the loving couple, in the course of which reproaches fly about, the true grounds whereof only a detailed explanation can make clear. Then the lover's agitation becomes violent indeed, and continues until the

matter comes completely into the open; when either the burden under which he has been struggling is lifted, if he has cause to hope for forgiveness, or his trepidation converts into sorrow and despair, if he is fearful that the beloved will thenceforward banish him. The lover may however submit humbly to the loved one's cruelty, as shall be expounded hereafter in its proper context, God willing.

Among the accidents of Love may be mentioned an extreme impatience under affliction, such a paroxysm of emotion as completely overwhelms the lover and leaves him speechless, as when he sees his beloved turning from him in undisguised aversion. I have a line or two referring to this.
width="151"

Fair fortitude imprisoned lies,
And tears flow freely from the eyes.

Another sign of Love is that you will see the lover loving his beloved's kith and kin and the intimate ones of his household, to such an extent that they are nearer and dearer to him than his own folk, himself, and all his familiar friends. Weeping is a well-known sign of Love; except that men differ very greatly from one another in this particular. Some are ready weepers; their tear-ducts are always overflowing, and their eyes respond immediately to their emotions, the tears rolling down at a moment's notice. Others are dry-eyed and barren of tears; to this category I myself belong. This is the result of my habit of eating frankincense to abate the palpitation from which I have suffered since childhood. I will be afflicted by some shocking blow, and at once feel my heart to be splitting and breaking into fragments; I have a choking sensation in my heart more bitter than colocynth, that prevents me from getting my words out properly, and sometimes well nigh suffocates me. My eyes therefore respond to my feelings but rarely, and then my tears are exceedingly sparse.

Writing the above paragraph has put me in mind of a certain day when I, with my companion Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Ishaq, was bidding farewell to our dear friend Abu `Amin Muhammad Ibn 'Amir (God have him in His mercy!) prior to his departure for the East on that journey after which we were never to see him again. Abu Bakr, as he said good-bye, began to weep, and cited the following verses to illustrate his grief.
width="151"

When thou on Wasit field didst lie
Felled to the dust, what eye
Grudged its last tears on thee to shed,
Was dry indeed and dead.

The stanza is taken from an elegy on Yazid Ibn `Umar Ibn Hubaira (God have mercy on his soul!). We were standing on the seashore at Malaga, and I began to feel more and more distressed and heartbroken, yet my eyes would not come to my aid. Then I said, in response to the verses quoted by Abu Bakr:
width="151"

The heart that shed not, still the Stoic,
Its fortitude heroic,
When thou wast gone, and it alone
That heart was made of stone!

I also have an ode, composed before reaching puberty, in which I follow the usual conventions observed by those who treat this theme; I will quote the opening lines.
width="151"

The sign of sorrow is a flame
That strikes the heart, and burns the same,
As too the tears that freely go
Adown the cheeks in ceaseless flow.

For when the man by Love possessed
Conceals the secret of his breast,
His tears the guarded truth betray
And bare it to the light of day.

So, when the tear-ducts overfill
The eyelids, and their torrent spill,
Be sure, if thou observant art,
Love's painful sickness rends that heart.

It will happen in Love that the lovers have evil thoughts of one another; each suspects every word the partner utters, and misconstrues it willfully; which is the origin of those reproaches which lovers often level each against each. I have an acquaintance who is normally the most unsuspicious man in the world, extremely broad-minded, possessed of great patience and untold tolerance, indulgent to a fault; yet when he is in love, he cannot endure the slightest thing between him and the object of his affection; let the least difference arise between them, and he will forthwith utter all kinds of reproaches and give voice to every manner of mistrust. I have put this situation into verse.
width="151"

I have a dark, suspicious mind,
And nothing negligible find
Thou doest; despicable they,
Who do despise Love's least affray-!

They will not see, until too late,
The roots of rupture and of hate,
Forgetting, to their own despite,
A spark may set a town alight.

Things of the greatest moment in
The humblest origins begin;
Witness the date-tree, hugely grown
To heaven from a little stone.

You will see the lover, when unsure of the constancy of his loved one's feelings for him, perpetually on his guard in a way that he never troubled to be before; he polishes his language, he refines his gestures and his glances, particularly if he has the misfortune and mischance to be in love with one given to making unjust accusations, or of a quarrelsome disposition.

Another sign of Love is the way the lover pays attention to the beloved; remembering everything that falls from his lips; searching out all the news about him, so that nothing small or great that happens to him may escape his knowledge; in short, following closely his every movement. Upon my life, sometimes you will see a complete dolt under these circumstances become most keen, a careless fellow turn exceedingly quick-witted.

I was seated one day at Almeria, with a knot of other people, in the shop of Ismail Ibn Yunus, the Hebrew physician who was also a shrewd and clever physiognomist. Mujahid Ibn al-Hasin al-Qaisi said to him, pointing to a certain man named Hatim-he was familiarly known as Abu 'l-Baga'-who was withdrawn apart from the rest of us, " What do you say about his man? " He looked at him for a brief moment, and then said, "He is passionately in love ". Mujahid exclaimed, " You are right; what made you say this? " Ismail answered, " Because of an extreme confusion apparent in his face. Simply that; otherwise all the rest of his movements are unremarkable. I knew from his that he is in love, and not suffering from any mental disorder."

OF FALLING IN LOVE WHILE ASLEEP

EVERY love affair must necessarily have some original cause. I shall now begin with the most unlikely of all causes of love, so that the discourse may proceed in due order, starting as ever with the simplest and easiest example. Love indeed is sometimes caused by things so strange, that but for having myself observed them I would not have mentioned them at all.

Now here is an instance from my own experience. One day I visited our friend Abu '1-Sari 'Ammar Ibn Ziyad, the freedman of al-Mu'aiyad, and found him deep in thought and much preoccupied. I asked him what was amiss; for a while he refused to explain, but then he said, "An extraordinary thing has happened to me, the like of which I have never heard." "What is that? I enquired. " Last night ", he answered, " I saw in a dream a young maiden, and on awaking I found that I had completely lost my heart to her, and that I was madly in love with her. Now I am in the most difficult straits possible, with this passion I have conceived for her." He continued cast down and afflicted for more than a month; nothing would cheer him up, so profound was his emotion. At last I scolded him, saying, " It is a vast mistake to occupy your soul with something unreal, and to attach your fantasy to a non-existent being. Do you know who she is? " " No, by Allah! " he replied. " Really ", I went on, " you have very little judgment, --and your discretion must be affected, if you axe actually in love with a person whom you have never seen, someone moreover who was never created and does not exist in the world at all. If you had fallen for one of those pictures they paint on the walls of the public baths, I would have

found it easier to excuse you." So I continued, until at last by making a great effort he forgot his trouble. Now my opinion is that his case is to be explained as a pure fantasy of the mind, a nightmare illusion, and falls into the category of wishful thinking and mental hallucination. I have expressed this situation actually in verse.
width="151"

Ah, would I knew who she might be,
And how she walked by night!
Was she the moon that shone on me,
The sun's uprising light?

A mere conjecture of the mind
By cogitation wrought?
An image that the soul designed,
Revealed to me by thought?

A picture that my spirit drew,
My hopes to realize,
And that my sight imagined to
Perceive in fleshly guise?

Or was she nothing of all these,
But just an accident
Contrived for me by Fate's decrees
With murderous intent?

OF FALLING IN LOVE THROUGH A DESCRIPTION

ONE of the strangest origins of passion is when a man falls in love through merely hearing the description of the other party, without ever having set eyes on the beloved. In such a case he will progress through all the accustomed stages of love; there will be the sending to and fro of messengers; the exchange of letters, the anxiety, the deep emotion, the sleeplessness; and all this without actual sight of the object of affection. Stories, descriptions of beautiful qualities, and the reporting of news about the fair one have a manifest effect on the soul; to hear a girl's voice singing behind a wall may well move the heart to love, and preoccupy the mind.

All this has occurred to more than one man. In my opinion, however, such a love is a tumbledown building without any foundations. If a man's thoughts are absorbed by passionate regard for one whom he has never seen, the inevitable result is that whenever he is alone with his own reflections, he will represent to himself a purely imaginary picture of the person whose identity he keeps constantly before his mind; no other being than this takes shape in his fantasy; he is completely carried away by his imagination, and visualizes and dreams of her only. Then, if

some day he actually sees the object of his fanciful passion, either his love is confirmed, or it is wholly nullified. Both these alternatives have actually happened and been known.

This kind of romance usually takes place between veiled ladies of guarded palaces and aristocratic households and their male kinsfolk; the love of women is more stable in these cases than that of men, because women are weak creatures and their natures swiftly respond to this sort of attraction, which easily masters them completely. I have described this type of love in verse.
width="151"

O thou who chidest me
Because my heart has been
Entranced by passion utterly
For one I have not seen

Thou dost exaggerate
In all that thou dost speak
Upon my passion, and dost state
My love is poor and weak.

For say: what do men know
Of Paradise above,
Save they have heard that it is so
And what they hear they love?

I also have some lines on the theme of admiring the beauty of a singing voice, without ever having seen the singer.
width="151"

Love's soldiery assailed mine ear
And now do occupy
My heart; their triumph doth appear
In my submissive eye.

In the lines which follow I describe the situation of truth belying conjecture, when the lover actually claps eyes on his beloved.
width="151"

They spoke in glowing terms of thee,
But when at last I chanced to see
That they described, at once I knew
Their words were nonsense and untrue.

Such is the drum: in origin
'Tis nothing but an empty skin,

But when the drummer beats its hide
A man is scared, and terrified!

I have also stated the converse case.
width="151"

So, too, the stories men recite
To picture the supreme delight
Of Paradise, fall short by far
Of those its actual pleasures are.

These conditions also obtain in the relations between friends and comrades, as I shall show in a personal reminiscence. There was once a strong bond of affection between myself and a member of a noble family; we corresponded frequently, but had never set eyes on one another. Then Allah granted me the boon of meeting him; and but a few days elapsed when a violent aversion and strong antipathy arose between us, that has continued uninterruptedly down to to the present day. I have put this incident into verse, and will quote a line or two.
width="151"

Thou didst convert my loving dream
To loathing, and to hate extreme
So copyists have oft times slipped
And quite transformed a manuscript

The opposite transpired in the case of my relations with Abu `Amin Ibn Abi `Amin (God keep him in His mercy!). Once I truly detested him, and he fully reciprocated my feelings; this was before I had seen .him, and he me. The root of the matter was a slanderous report, which had been carried to each of us about the other, aggravated by an aversion existing between our respective fathers that sprung from their mutual rivalry in the race for preferment at Court and worldly promotion. Then Allah so ordained that we should come together; thereafter he became my dearest friend, and I his likewise, until the day that death parted us. The following verses were written by me to commemorate this friendship.
width="151"

He was a brother, whom I gained
By meeting, and thereby obtained
A truly noble treasure;
His friendship was not wished by me,
And I supposed his company
Would yield me little pleasure

But he, who was my erstwhile foe,
Became my friend, he, whom I so
Abhorred, my heart's sweet rapture;

And having ever sought to fly
From meeting him, thereafter I
Sought ever him to capture.

As for Abu Shakir 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Muhammad al-Qabri, he was my friend for a long while before I ever saw him; then we met, and our love was confirmed; and it has continued without interruption right down to the present time.

OF FALLING IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

OFTEN it happens that Love fastens itself to the heart as the result of a single glance. This variety of Love is divided into two classes.

The first class is the contrary of what we have just been describing, in that a man will fall head over heels in love with a mere form, without knowing who that person may be, what her name- is, or where she lives. This has happened to more than one man.

Our friend Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ishaq informed me, quoting a trustworthy authority whose name has escaped me-though I think it was Judge Ibn al-Hadhdha' that the poet Yusuf Ibn Harun, better known as al-Ramadi, was one day passing the Gate of the Perfumers at Cordova, a place where ladies were wont to congregate, when he espied a young girl who, as he said, "entirely captured my heart, so that all my limbs were penetrated by the love of her ". He therefore turned aside from going to the mosque and set himself instead to following her, while she for her part set off towards the bridge, which she then crossed and came to the place known as al-Rabad. When she reached the mausolea of the Banu Marwan (God have mercy on their souls!) that are erected over their graves in the cemetery of al-Rabad, beyond' the river, she observed him to have gone apart from the rest of the people and to be preoccupied solely with her. She accordingly went up to him and said, " Why are you walking behind me?" He told her how sorely smitten he was with her, and she replied, "Have done with that! Do not seek to expose me to shame; you have no prospect of achieving your purpose, and there is no way to you're gratifying your desire. -" He countered, " I am satisfied merely to look at you." " That is permitted to you ", she replied. Then he asked her, " My lady, are you a freewoman, or are you a slave? " " I am a slave ", she answered. "And what is your name?" he enquired. " Khalwa ", she told him. "And to whom do you belong? " He asked next. To this she retorted, " By Allah, you are likelier to know what inhabits the Seventh Heaven, than the answer to that question. Seek not the impossible! " " My lady ", he begged, " Where may I see you again? " " Where you saw me to-day", she replied, " at the same hour, every Friday." Then she added, " Will you go off now, or shall I? " " Do you go off, in Allah's protection! " he replied. So she went off in the direction of the bridge; and he could not follow her, because she kept looking round to see if he was accompanying her or not. When she had passed the gate of the bridge, he came after her but could find no trace of her whatsoever. "'And by Allah ", said Abu `Umar (that is to say, Yusuf Ibn Harun), recounting the story of his adventure, " I have frequented the Perfumers' Gate and al-Rabad the whole time from then till now, but I have never come upon any further news of her. I know not whether the heavens have devoured her, or whether the earth has swallowed her up; and the feeling I have in my heart on her account is hotter than burning coals." This is the Khalwa whose name he celebrates in his love lyrics. Thereafter he had news of her after he journeyed to Saragossa for her sake, but that is a long story.

This sort of thing happens frequently enough; I have a poem on the subject, from which I here quote.
width="151"

Against my heart mine eye designed
Great wrong, and anguish to my mind,
Which sin my spirit to requite

Hath loosed these tears against my sight.

How shall mine eye behold in fact
This justice that my tears exact,
Seeing that in their flood profound
My weeping eye is wholly drowned?

Since I had never seen her yet
I could not know her, when we met;
The final thing of her I knew
Was what I saw at that first view.

The second class of the variety of Love now under discussion is the contrary of what we shall be describing in the chapter next following, if Allah wills. This is for a map to form an attachment at first sight with a young lady whose name, place of abode and origin are known to him. The difference here is the speed or tardiness with which the affair passes off. When a man falls in love at first sight, and forms a sudden attachment as the result of a fleeting glance, that proves him to be little steadfast, and proclaims that he will as suddenly forget his romantic adventure; it testifies to his fickleness and inconstancy. So, it is with all things; the quicker they grow, the quicker they decay; while on the other hand slow produced is slow consumed.

A young fellow I know, the son of a clerk, was one day observed by a lady of noble birth, high position and strict seclusion; she saw him passing by, while peeping out from a place of vantage in her home, and conceived an attachment for him which he reciprocated. They exchanged epistles for a time, by ways more delicate than the edge of a fine-ground sword; and were it not that I purpose not in this essay to uncover such ruses and make mention of such subterfuges, I could have set down here such things as I am certain would have confounded the shrewdest and astonished the most intelligent of men. I pray that God in His great bounty will draw over us and all good Moslems the curtain of His mercy. He is indeed sufficient for our needs.

OF FALLING IN LOVE AFTER LONG ASSOCIATION

SOME men there are whose love only becomes true after long converse, much contemplation, and extended familiarity. Such a one is likely to persist and to be steadfast in his affection, untouched by the passage of time what enters with difficulty goes not out easily. That is my own way in these matters, and it is confirmed by Holy Tradition. For God, as we are informed by our teachers, when He commanded the Spirit to enter Adam's body, that was like an earthen vessel-and the Spirit was afraid, and sorely distressed -said to it, "Enter in unwillingly, and come forth again unwillingly! " I have myself seen a man of this description who, whenever he sensed within himself the beginnings of a passionate attachment, or conceived a penchant for some form whose beauty he admired, at once employed the device of shunning that person and giving up all association with him, lest his feelings become more intense and the affair get beyond his control, and he find himself completely stampeded. This proves how closely Love

cleaves to such people's hearts, and once it lays hold of them never looses its grip. I have a poem on this subject, and will quote an extract.
width="151"

I am resolved to keep afar
Wherever Love's attractions are;
The man of sense, as I detect,
Is ever shrewd and circumspect.

I have observed that love begins
When some poor fellow for his sins,
Thinks, it is thrilling, ever so,
To gaze on cheeks where roses glow.

But while he sports so joyfully
With not a care to mar his glee,
The links are forging, one by one,
And he's enchained, before he's done.

So there he is, deluded fool;
Stepping benignly in the pool
He slips, and ere he can look round
He's swept along the flood, and drowned.

I indeed marvel profoundly at all those who pretend to fall in love at first sight; I cannot easily prevail upon myself to believe their claim, and prefer to consider such love as merely a kind of lust. As for thinking that that sort of attachment can really possess the inmost heart, and penetrate the veil of the soul's recess, that I cannot under any circumstances credit. Love has never truly gripped my bowels, save after a long lapse of time, and constant companionship with the person concerned, sharing with him all that while my every occupation, be it earnest or frivolous. So I am alike in consolation and in passion; I have never in my life forgotten any romance, and my nostalgia for every former attachment is such that I well nigh choke when I drink, and suffocate when I eat. The man who is not so constituted quickly finds complete relief and is at rest again; I have never wearied of anything once I have known it, and neither have I hastened to feel at home with it on first acquaintance. Similarly I have never longed for a change for change's sake, in any of the things that I have possessed; I am speaking here not only of friends and comrades, but' also of all the other things a man uses-clothes, riding-beast, food, and so on. Life holds no joy for me, and I do nothing but hang my head and feel utterly cast down, ever since I first tasted the bitterness of being-separated from those I love. It is an anguish that constantly revisits me, an agony of grief that ceases not for a moment to assail me. My remembrance of past happiness has abated for me every joy that I may look for in the future. I am a dead man, though counted among the living, slain by sorrow and buried by sadness, entombed while yet a dweller on the face of this mortal earth. Allah be praised, whatever be the circumstances that befall us; there is indeed no other God but He!

I have meditated upon this theme in verse as follows.
width="151"

True love is not a flower
That springeth in an hour;
Its flint will not strike fire
At casual desire.

Love is an infant rare
Begotten, slow to bear;
Its lime must mingle long
Before its base is strong.

And then not soon will it
Be undermined, and split;
Firm will its structure stand,
Its fabric still expand.

This truth is readily
Confirmed, because we see
That things too quickly grown
Are swiftly overthrown.

Mine is a stubborn soil
To plough with arduous toil,
Intractible indeed
To tiller and to seed.

But once the roots begin
To strike and thrive therein,
Come bounteous rain, come drought,
The lusty stem will sprout.

Now let no man think or imagine that what I have here said is contrary to my statement, inscribed in the exordium of this treatise, that Love is a union of souls effected within the substance of their supernal world. On the contrary, my present remarks confirm that assertion. For we know that in this lower world the soul is shrouded in many veils, that it is overtaken By divers accidents, that it is encompassed by all those earthy, mundane instincts; in consequence many of true attributes are obscured. And although all these obstacles do not preclude the soul entirely from achieving union with its fellow-soul, nevertheless they undoubtedly stand in the way of that union, which may therefore only be truly realized after long and careful preparation and making ready. The soul must first be made aware of its points of resemblance and concord with its fellow-soul; it must confront its own hidden temperaments with the corresponding

temperaments of the beloved. Then and then only will veritable union be consummated, and that without further let or hindrance.

As for what transpires at first blush as a result of certain accidental circumstances-physical admiration, and visual enchantment which does not go beyond mere external forms-and this is the very secret and meaning of carnal desire; when carnal desire moreover becomes so overflowing that it surpasses these bounds, and when such an overflow coincides with a spiritual union, in which the natural instincts share equally with the soul; the resulting phenomenon is called passionate love. Herein lies the root of the error, which misleads a man into asserting that he loves two persons, or is passionately enamored of two entirely different individuals. All this is to be explained as springing out of carnal' desire, as we have just described; it is called love only metaphorically, and not in the true meaning of the term. As for the true lover, his yearning of the soul is so excessive as to divert him from all his religious and mundane occupations; how then should he have room to busy himself with a second love affair?

I have put this point into verse.
width="151"

He lies, and perjures all that's true;
Who swears he is in love with two
He shares in falsehood equally
With that damned miscreant, Manichee.

The heart has not sufficient place
To hold two sweets in one embrace,
Nor may the second love affair
Claim with the first an equal share.

For as the Reason is unique
It cannot know, though it may seek,
Another Power to create
Besides the All Compassionate.

And so the Heart, that's likewise one,
Is constituted to love none
Except that single darling dear,
Be he afar or be he near.

The man who claims a dual love
Is thus, as these examples prove,
A doubtful follower of Love's laws,
A traitor to Religion's cause.

And by that selfsame reasoning
True Faith is too a single thing;

He who a second serves as well
Condemns himself an infidel.

I know a certain young man who is rich, of noble birth, and of the finest education, and who made a practice of purchasing slave-girls. The girl would be o begin with innocent of any regard for him; still worse, she would positively dislike him, for indeed his ways were not very engaging, with that perpetual scowl which never left his face, particularly when he was with women; yet within a very short time he had mastered her to his will. Thereupon her -aversion would be changed into excessive love, extreme affection, and quite shameless infatuation; whereas formerly she was irritated to be in his company, now she could not endure to be parted from him. The same thing happened with a remarkable number of the girls. A friend of mine asked him once how he explained his success; in a detailed reply he ascribed it to his unusual dexterity in lovemaking.

This example-and I could quote others-proves that when a spiritual concord is once established, love is immediately engendered. Physical contact completes -the circuit and thus enables the current of love to flow freely into the soul.

OF FALLING IN LOVE WITH A QUALITY AND THEREAFTER NOT APPROVING ANY OTHER DIFFERENT

KNOW now-may God exalt you! -that Love exercises an effective authority, a decisive sovereignty over the soul; its commands cannot be opposed, its ordinances may not be flouted, its rule is not to be transgressed; it demands unwavering obedience, and against its dominion there is no appeal. Love untwists the firmest plaits, and looses the tightest strands it dissolves that which is most solid, undoes that which is most firm; it penetrates the deepest recesses of the heart, and makes lawful things most strictly forbidden.

I have known many men whose discrimination was beyond suspicion, men not to be feared deficient in knowledge, or wanting in taste, or lacking discernment, and who nevertheless described their loved ones as possessing certain qualities not by any means admired by the general run of mankind, or approved according to the accepted canons of beauty. Yet those qualities had become an obsession with them, the sole object of their passion, and the very last word (as they thought) in elegance. Thereafter their loved ones vanished, either into oblivion, or by separation, or jilting, or through some other accident to which love is always liable; but those men never lost their admiration for the curious qualities which provoked their approval of them, neither did they ever afterwards cease to prefer these above other attributes that are in.-reality superior to them. They had no inclination whatsoever for any qualities besides these; indeed, the very features which the rest of mankind deem most excellent were shunned and despised by them. So they continued until the day of their death; all their lives were spent in sighing regretfully for the loved ones they had lost, and taking joyous delight in their remembered companionship. I do not consider, that this was any kind of affectation on their part; on the contrary, it was their true and natural disposition to admire such eccentric qualities; they chose them unreservedly, they thought none other worthy of regard, and in the very depths of their souls they did not believe otherwise.

I know a man whose loved one was somewhat short of neck; thereafter he never admired anyone, man or girl, whose neck was long and slender. I also know a man whose first attachment was with a girl inclined to be petite; he never fell in love with a tall woman after that. A third man I know was madly enamoured of a girl whose mouth was a trifle wide; lie thought small mouths positively disgusting, he abused them roundly, and clearly felt an authentic aversion in regard to them. Now the men of whom I have been speaking are by no means under-endowed knowledge and culture; on the contrary they are men of the keenest perception, truly worthy to be described as intelligent and understanding.

Let me add a personal touch. In my youth I loved a slave-girl who happened to be a blonde; from that time I have never admired brunettes, not though their lark tresses set off a face as resplendent as the sun, or the very image of beauty itself. I find this taste to have become a part of my whole make-up and constitution since those early days; my soul will not suffer me to acquire any other, or to love any type but that. This very same thing happened to my father also God be pleased with him!), and he remained faithful his first preference until the term of his earthly life was done.

All the Caliphs of the Banu Marwan (God have mercy on their souls!), and especially the sons of al-Nasir, were without variation or exception disposed by nature to prefer blondes. I have myself seen them, and known others who had seen their forebears, from the days of al-Nasir's reign down to the present day; every one of them has been fair-haired, taking after, their mothers, so that this has become a hereditary trait with them; all but Sulaiman al-Zafir (God have mercy on him!), whom I remember to have had black ringlets and a black beard. As for al-Nasir and al-Hakam al-Mustansir (may God be pleased with them!), I have been informed by my late father, the vizier, as well as by others, that both of them were blond and blue-eyed. The same is true of Hisham al-Mu'aiyad, Muhammad al-Mahdi, and `Abd al-Rahman al-Murtada (may God be merciful to them all!); I saw them myself many times, and had the honour of being received by them, and I remarked that they all had fair hair and blue eyes. Their sons, their brothers, and all their near kinsmen possessed the selfsame characteristics. I know not whether this was due to a predilection innate in them all, or whether it was in consequence of a family tradition handed down from their ancestors, and which they followed in their turn. This comes out clearly in the poetry of `Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan Ibn `Abd al-Rahman Ibn Marwan, the descendant of the Caliph al-Nasir, better known as al-Taliq; he was the greatest poet of Andalusia in those times, and in most of his love lyrics he serenades blondes. I have seen him personally, and sat in his company.

It is not so remarkable that a man who has once fallen in love with an ill-favored wench should not carry that foible with him for the rest of his amatory career; it is one of those things that are always liable to happen. Neither is it astonishing that a man should prefer the inferior article, when such an eccentricity is part of his inborn nature. What is truly amazing, is that a man formerly accustomed to see things with the eye of truth should suddenly be overcome by a casual passion, after he has been out about in society a long time, and that this accident of caprice should so completely transform him from his previous habits as to become a second nature with him, entirely displacing his first. In such extraordinary cases he will know well enough the superiority of his former disposition, but when he comes back to his senses he finds that his soul now refuses to have anything to do with any but the baser sort of goods. Marvelous indeed is the mighty domination, the splendid tyranny of the human passion. Such a man is a

sincere and devoted lover, and not he who apes the manners of folk with whom he has no connexion whatever, and pretends to a character which belongs to him not at all. The latter sort of man asserts indeed that he chooses at will whom he will love; but if love had really taken possession of his powers of discernment, if love had extirpated his native reason and swept away his natural discretion, then love would have so dominated his soul that he would no longer be free to pick and choose, as he so boasts to do.

I have a poem or two on this theme also.
width="151"

I know a youth that loved a lass
Whose neck was short and somewhat stout;
And now, when long-necked maidens pass,
He thinks them jinn's, without a doubt.

He is content, to justify
His claim that he has chosen well,
Upon a logic to rely
That has some substance, truth to tell.

Thus he would argue: " The wild cow
Is famed in proverb and in song,
And no man lives, but will allow
Beauty doth to the cow belong.

"Now never was the wild cow born
Whose neck was long and angular;
And are not camels held inn scorn
Because their necks stick out so far?"

I know another lad who loved
A most uncommon wide-mouthed dame
He said, " Her loveliness is proved
By the gazelle, whose mouth's the same."

And still a third young chap I know
Whose well-beloved was unco small;
" Tall women ", he would say, " are so
Stuck up-they're devils, one and all."

Another poem of mine is worth quoting here.
width="151"

They blame the girl of whom I'm fond

Because her lovely hair is blond:
"But that's exactly", I reply,
"What makes her pretty, to my eye!"

They criticize the colour bright
Of glittering gold, and shimmering light,
And they are crazy so to do,
And stupid, and erroneous, too.

Is there just a cause to crab, think you,
The tender-sweet narcissus' hue,
Or is the twinkle of a star
So hateful to behold afar?

Of all God's creatures, I declare
That man of wisdom has least share
Who chooses, in his darkened soul,
To love a body black as coal.

Black is the hue, the Scriptures tell,
Of the inhabitants of Hell;
Black is the robe the mourner dons,
And mothers who have lost their sons.

Moreover, since from Khorasan
The black Abbasid banners ran,
The souls of men know, to their cost,
The cause of righteousness is lost.

OF ALLUSION BY WORDS

WHATEVER it may be that one is seeking after, one must inevitably contrive some means of coming in to it, some expedient whereby one may achieve access to and attainment of it. There is but one person uniquely able to create without intermediary; the Prime Omniscient Himself, be He ever exalted and extolled!

The first device employed by those who seek union, being lovers, in order to disclose their feelings to the object of their passion, is allusion by means of words. Either they will quote a verse of poetry, or despatch an allegory, or rhyme a riddle, or propose an enigma, or use heightened language. Men vary in their methods according to the degree of their perspicacity, or the amount of aversion or sympathy, wit or dullness, which they remark in their loved ones. I know a man who commenced his declaration of love by quoting to his lady some verses of my own composition. This and the like are the shifts resorted to in the first stages of the love-quest.

If the lover detects some sign of sympathy and encouragement, he then proceeds further. When he observes one or other of the characteristics we have described, while in the actual course of quoting some such verses, or hinting obliquely at the meaning he wishes to convey in the manner we have defined, then as he waits for his reply, whether it is to be given verbally, or by a grimace, or a gesture, he finds himself in a truly fearful situation, torn between hope and despair; and though the interval may be brief, enough, yet in that instant he becomes aware if his ambition is attainable, or if it must be abandoned.

There is another variety of verbal allusion, which is only to be brought into play when an accord has been reached, and the lover knows that his sentiments are reciprocated. Then it is that the complaints begin, the assignations, the reproaches, the plighting of eternal troths. All this is accomplished by means of verbal allusions, which to the uninitiated hearer appear to convey a meaning quite other to that intended by the lovers; he replies in terms entirely different from the true purport of the exchanges, following the impression which his imagination forms on the basis of what his ears have picked up. Meanwhile each of the loving pair has understood his partner's meaning perfectly, and answered in a manner not to be comprehended by any but the two of them; unless indeed the listener is endowed with a penetrating sensibility, assisted by a sharp wit and reinforced by long experience. Especially is this the case if the intelligent bystander has some sense of what the lovers are hinting at; rarely indeed does this escape the detection of the trained observer. In that event, no single detail of what the lovers are intending remains hidden from him.

I know of a youth and a girl who were very much in love with each other. In the course of one of his interviews with her, the young man made a slightly improper suggestion. At this the girl exclaimed, " By Allah! I shall make a public complaint against you, and I shall put you to shame privately." Some days later the girl found herself in a company of great princes and the leading statesmen of the realm; present also were a great number of women and of servants, against whom it would be well to be on one's guard. The youth in question was in the concourse too, for he was in the entourage of the master of ceremonies. Other singing girls besides her were in attendance. When it came to her turn to sing, she tuned her lute and began to chant the words of an ancient song.
width="151"

Sweet fawn adorable,
Fair as the moon at full,
Or like the sun, that through
Dark clouds shines out to view

With that so languid glance
He did my heart entrance,
With that lithe stature, he
As slender as a tree.

I yielded to his whim,
I humbled me to him,
As lovesick suitor still

Obeys his darling's will.

Let me thy ransom be!
Embrace me lawfully
I would not give my charms
Into licentious arms.

I myself have known this situation, and put it into verse.
width="151"

Harsh words of bitter blame
And false complaining came
From one most cruel, who
Was judge, and plaintiff too!

She laid her nameless charge
Before the world at large,
But none knew her intent
Save him, whose hurt she meant.